

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-69 are cancelled.

70. (Currently amended) An array of nucleic acid probes, wherein:
each probe has a double-stranded portion; ~~at the 3' terminus,~~ a
~~degenerate~~ terminal single-stranded portion; ~~at the 5' terminus,~~ and
a random variable nucleotide sequence ~~of length R~~ within the
single-stranded portion, wherein the variable sequence is not at the
terminus.

71. (Cancelled)

72. (Previously presented) The array of claim 70, wherein the double-stranded portion is between about 3-20 nucleotides and the single-stranded portion is between about 3-20 nucleotides.

73. (Previously presented) The array of claim 70, wherein the probes are fixed to a solid support by conjugating to a coupling agent selected from the group consisting of antibody/antigen, biotin/streptavidin, *Staphylococcus aureus* protein A/IgG antibody F_c fragment, nucleic acid/nucleic acid binding protein, and streptavidin/protein A chimeras.

74. (Currently amended) An array of nucleic acid probes, wherein each probe comprises

~~a single-stranded portion at one terminus and a double-stranded portion at the opposite terminus, wherein~~

~~the single-stranded portion includes a random nucleotide sequence~~ first
nucleic acid of about 15-25 nucleotides in length R; ~~and nucleotides comprising~~
~~ligated nucleic acid present in a target nucleic acid; and~~

a longer single-stranded second nucleic acid of about 20-30 nucleotides in
length, comprising a nucleotide sequence complementary to the first nucleic

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acid and a variable terminal nucleotide sequence of between about 3-10 nucleotides in length; and

an oligonucleotide of about 4-20 nucleotides in length, comprising a random nucleotide sequence, wherein:

the first nucleic acid is hybridized to the second nucleic acid to form a hybrid having a double-stranded portion and a single-stranded portion; and

the oligonucleotide is ligated to the variable nucleotide sequence of the second nucleic acid.

~~one strand of the double-stranded portion is conjugated to a coupling agent through which the probes are fixed to a solid support.~~

75. (Amended herein) The array of claim 74, which is fixed to a solid support, wherein the solid support is selected from the group consisting of plastics, ceramics, metals, resins, gels, membranes, and chips.

76. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 74, wherein the solid support is a two-dimensional or a three-dimensional matrix with multiple probe binding sites.

77. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 70, wherein the probes are labelled with a detectable label.

78. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 77, wherein the detectable label is selected from the group consisting of a radioisotope, a stable isotope, an enzyme, an antibody, a fluorescent chemical, a luminescent chemical, a chromatic chemical, and a metal.

79. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 70, wherein the nucleic acids are DNA, RNA, Protein Nucleic Acid (PNA), or a combination thereof.

Claims 80-91 are cancelled.

92. (Previously presented) The array of claim 74, wherein the probes are labelled with a detectable label.

93. (Previously presented) The array of claim 92, wherein the detectable label is selected from the group consisting of radioisotope, a stable isotope, an enzyme, an antibody, a fluorescent chemical, a luminescent chemical, a chromatic chemical, and a metal.

94. (Previously presented) The array of claim 74, wherein the nucleic acids are DNA, RNA, Protein Nucleic Acid (PNA), or a combination thereof.

Claims 95-122 are cancelled.

123. (Currently amended) The array of claim 74, wherein the probes are fixed to a solid support by conjugating to a ~~the~~ coupling agent is selected from the group consisting of antibody/antigen, biotin/streptavidin, *Staphylococcus aureus* protein A/IgG antibody F_c fragment, nucleic acid/nucleic acid binding protein, and streptavidin/protein A chimeras.

124. (Currently amended) The array of claim 74, wherein the variable region is of length n and the array comprises ~~comprising~~ about ~~$\{4^R\}$~~ 4^n different nucleic acid probes.

Claims 125 and 126 are cancelled.

127. (Currently amended) An array of nucleic acid probes, wherein each probe comprises a single-stranded portion at one terminus, a double-stranded portion at the opposite terminus, and a variable ~~random~~ nucleotide sequence within the single-stranded portion, wherein

~~within~~ the single-stranded portion of each probe comprises a predetermined sequence of fixed and non-fixed positions; and

the array is divided into subarrays, wherein for each subarray a selected base of the nucleotide sequence occupies the fixed positions of the probes and, one base is used at a defined number of positions and all other bases except that the selected base are used in the non-fixed positions such that the fixed positions of the different subarrays are occupied by a different selected base.
~~remaining positions, and—
the probes are fixed to a solid support by conjugating to a coupling agent.~~

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128. (Currently amended) The array of claim 138 ~~127~~, wherein the coupling agent is selected from the group consisting of antibody/antigen, biotin/streptavidin, *Staphylococcus aureus* protein A/IgG antibody F_c fragment, nucleic acid/nucleic acid binding protein, and streptavidin/protein A chimeras.

129. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 127, wherein the probes are labelled with a detectable label.

130. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 129, wherein the detectable label is selected from the group consisting of a radioisotope, a stable isotope, an enzyme, an antibody, a fluorescent chemical, a luminescent chemical, a chromatic chemical, and a metal.

131. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 127, wherein the nucleic acids are DNA, RNA, Protein Nucleic Acid (PNA), or a combination thereof.

132. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 127, wherein the solid support is selected from the group consisting of plastics, ceramics, metals, resins, gels, membranes, and chips.

133. (Previously Presented) The array of claim 127, wherein the solid support is a two-dimensional or a three-dimensional matrix with multiple probe binding sites.

134. (Cancelled)

135. (Currently amended) The array of claim 127 ~~claim 74~~, wherein ~~the nucleic acid comprises at least one modified base~~ the non-fixed positions of the probes are occupied by a base analog.

136. (New) The array of claim 74, wherein the constant portion of each probe includes an enzyme recognition site.

137. (New) The array of claim 127, which is fixed to a solid support.

138. (New) The array of claim 127, wherein the probes are fixed to a solid support by conjugating to a coupling agent.